
Ecology & Parks Committee

SSB 5061

Brief Description: Enhancing natural resource collections at the Washington park arboretum.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senator Jacobsen).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Sets goals for the Washington Park Arboretum.
- Establishes the University of Washington Botanic Gardens Endowed Curatorship.
- Creates the University of Washington Botanic Gardens Endowed Curatorship Account.

Hearing Date: 3/20/09

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339)

Background:

The Washington Park Arboretum (Arboretum) was established cooperatively by the University of Washington and the city of Seattle in 1934. The city of Seattle holds title to most of the property and the University of Washington owns, designs, develops, and manages the collections at the Arboretum and the University of Washington Botanic Gardens (Botanic Gardens).

The Botanic Gardens are within the College of Forest Resources, and in turn, the Arboretum is housed within the Botanic Gardens.

The 230-acre Arboretum contains approximately 20,000 trees, shrubs, and vines representing approximately 4,600 different species.

Summary of Bill:

The Arboretum must strive to:

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- enhance public appreciation for the aesthetic diversity of temperate wood plants;
- educate the public and regional school population about urban landscape use and the natural biology of temperate wood plants;
- conserve and keep healthy native, exotic, and cultivated woody plants to preserve diversity for future appreciation;
- maintain and enhance collections, exhibits, and facilities to create the best possible ambiance and visitor experience; and
- cooperate with local, regional, national, and international entities that have a similar mission.

The University of Washington Botanic Gardens Endowed Curatorship is established within the University of Washington to support a botanic gardens curator within the Botanic Gardens. The botanic gardens curator must focus on: (1) the preservation, maintenance, and presentation of the Botanic Gardens' collections; and (2) the goals for the Arboretum.

The University of Washington Botanic Gardens Endowed Curatorship Account (Account) is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. All moneys appropriated by the Legislature must be placed in the Account.

The State Treasurer must release money in the Account to the University of Washington Board of Regents for inclusion in the University of Washington Consolidated Endowment Fund when the University of Washington Board of Regents determines that it can match the state funds requested with an equal amount of non-state funds. Distributions from the University of Washington Consolidated Endowment Fund resulting from this investment must be used solely for the purposes of the endowed curatorship.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.